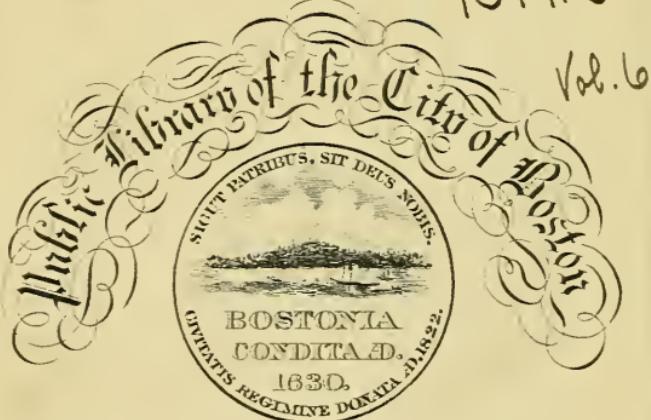


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# ANTI-SLAVERY MONTHLY REPORTER.

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## REVIEW OF THE LAST SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.—SPEECHES OF LORD SEAFORD, WITH CURSORY OBSERVATIONS UPON THEM.

We promised, at the close of the last Reporter, to make some remarks on the positions contained in two speeches said to have been delivered in the House of Lords by Lord Seaford, on the 23d of June and the 18th of July last. We proceed to fulfil our promise.

The main object of the first of these speeches (which was a mere abstract of a great part of Mr. Wilmot Horton's pamphlet, "The West India question practically considered,") was to show that the abolitionists had departed from the principles they formerly professed on the subject of the extinction of slavery. While the slave trade still existed, Mr. Fox, Mr. Brougham, and Mr. Wilberforce himself, his Lordship labours to prove, had deprecated any parliamentary interference with the colonial legislatures; and were of opinion, that, the slave trade being abolished, the measures to be subsequently taken for improving the condition of the slaves should be left to the colonial assemblies. He also cites the Directors of the African Institution as looking forward to emancipation not by any convulsion, nor even by the effect of positive law, but by a benign though insensible revolution in opinions and manners; by the encouragement of individual manumissions; and by a progressive amelioration of the condition of the slaves, producing an increase of their numbers; of which changes their masters would be the authors and the willing instruments, and by means of which slavery would silently and imperceptibly glide into freedom.

If the point were at all material, it would be easy to show that Lord Seaford's representation of the early views of the abolitionists is altogether incorrect. Those who deem the matter worth a moment's inquiry may consult a pamphlet published in 1823, for the Anti-Slavery Society, and entitled "A Review of the Arguments against parliamentary interference on behalf of the Negro Slaves," in which is given a statement of the views, on that subject, of many of our most eminent statesmen, in-

cluding the names of Burke, Pitt, Dundas, Fox, Windham, Grenville, Grey, Canning, Romilly, Wilberforce, &c. At the same time we have no solicitude to prove, that none of the earlier abolitionists entertained, at one time, sentiments which have subsequently been modified, or even reversed, by a change of circumstances,—by a more correct knowledge of facts, by improved lights and increasing experience, by the occurrence of unlooked-for opposition, and by the misconduct of those on whom they may have relied for aid and co-operation. To Lord Seaford, therefore, we would say, as we have already said, in reply to Mr. Wilmot Horton, that if, at a former period, the abolitionists were led to place an undeserved and unwarranted confidence in the purposes of the colonists, respecting the improvement of the condition of their slaves, neither they, nor those who have entered into their labours, are to be blamed as wanting in good faith, because the experience of thirty or forty years has satisfied them that their confidence was misplaced, and that all hope of improvement, except from parliamentary interference, has become vain and illusory.

But have Lord Seaford's own opinions undergone no revolution? Has he forgot that, during his early parliamentary career, he was (as we shall hereafter show) the strenuous supporter of the slave trade, and the opponent of its abolition? And yet he now praises that very measure, and concurs in attributing to it the most salutary results. He then also (we allude to the year 1797) praised as loudly as he does now the condition of the slave population. We contend indeed that since that time it has undergone little or no improvement. But this is not the language of him and of his party. They maintain, with Mr. Dwaris, that a most signal and complete change for the better has taken place since 1797. And yet Lord Seaford's eulogy of the slave system in 1797 may be substituted for that of 1828, without detracting from the force of the latter. The truth is there never has been, and never will be, in the grammar of slave-holders, any present tense for the oppressions of slavery.\* When has any one of them, even Lord Seaford himself, been found to come forward, voluntarily, to denounce, instead of to palliate and defend, its evils?

We do not deny, indeed, that some excuse may be made for his Lordship. He is the proprietor of perhaps a thousand negroes. A large part of his income, many of his enjoyments, and probably even the elevation of his rank, are the fruits of their bondage, of their forced and uncompensated toil, of what *we* regard as their degradation and oppression. Now it is perfectly natural that Lord Seaford should be anxious to persuade himself and others that there is nothing, in this dependence of his on the slavery of his fellow-creatures, which should wound his self-esteem, or abate the confidence of the public in his statements respecting that condition of society; and that he should endeavour, nay, that he should even succeed in the endeavour, to hide from his own view the deformity of the system with which he is so very closely and profitably connected. But though this be natural, and may serve as some apology both for his Lordship's views of the subject, and for his vitupe-

\* See Anti-Slavery Reporters, No. 18, p. 255, and No. 37, p. 250.

ration of those who differ from him, yet the public, whose eyes are open, are not unlikely, we apprehend, to form a somewhat different judgment from his Lordship, and to doubt whether his testimony or his advocacy, in favour of colonial bondage, derives the weight to which his private character might otherwise entitle it, from his being the proprietor of a thousand slaves.

Lord Seaford professes to entertain views now which are exactly in unison with those which were formerly held by the abolitionists. To the abolitionists, however, at the time he alleges them to have held those views, he was stoutly opposed. Thirty years ago, it seems from his statement of their sentiments, they hoped that the effect of abolishing the slave trade, would be an improvement in the condition of the slaves, and a consequent increase of the native slave population. But, supposing that to have been the case, in what way has this hope been realized? Instead of an increase of the population, the fact is, that there has been a progressive decrease; nor does his Lordship attempt to shew that the intensity and continuity of their labours, which were always the great sources of that decrease, have been diminished, or that women do not still bear an equal share with the men, in the exhausting labours of the field, under a tropical sun, and impelled by the lash of the driver. Even in Jamaica, where Lord Seaford's estates lie, and even if the new act of 1826 had not been disallowed, eleven hours and a half of such labour might, by law, be daily exacted from them, independently of a variety of other offices which cannot be dispensed with; and to all this, during five months of the year, the toil of half the night might still be superadded. And what other results could be expected from such a system than those which have actually followed from it, namely, a frightful waste of human life; and, in the women, almost an extinction of the very powers of procreation.\* Accordingly, while population, in every other part of the world, is advancing; while the negro slaves in the United States, and the free negroes of Hayti; nay, while the free negroes and people of colour in our West Indian possessions, including the maroons of Jamaica, are doubling their numbers in periods of from twenty to thirty-five years, the colonial slaves of Great Britain are annually diminishing. Among the 330,000 slaves of Jamaica there is a positive waste of human life, as compared either with the free blacks of Hayti, or the negro slaves of the United States, amounting to little short of 10,000 human beings annually. And to what can we attribute this enormous waste of life, but to the system of oppression under which they groan?

We are perfectly ready to yield to Lord Seaford the fullest credit for an earnest desire to promote the comfort and well-being of his own slaves. And yet is it possible for us wholly to overlook the results of the colonial system, even as it is administered, under his directions, by

\* It has been affirmed, and apparently on sufficient data, though we ourselves have had no opportunity of verifying them, that, in Mexico, the annual proportion of births to the whole population, is one in eighteen, or five and a half per cent.; while, in Jamaica, it is only one in forty-two, or two and a half per cent. Supposing this fact established, what stronger confirmation could be given of the curse which colonial slavery entails on its victims!

stipendiary agents, at a distance of some thousand miles from his own immediate inspection and effectual control? The following appear to be the returns of the slave population, on three estates belonging to his Lordship, between the month of March, 1820, and the month of March, 1824:

	March, 1820.	March, 1824.
Shuttlewood . .	155	148
New Montpelier .	354	328
Old Montpelier .	416	399
	—	—
	925	875

These returns exhibit a decrease, in four years, of fifty lives, or nearly five and a half per cent., being at the rate of a little more than one and a half per cent. per annum. If, during that period, his slaves had increased only in the proportion of the maroons, who reside in their immediate vicinity, that is to say, at the rate of two per cent. per annum, they would have grown to 1000. Instead of this they have decreased to 875, being a difference, in four years, of 125, or from a seventh to an eighth of the whole.\*

We select this instance as exhibiting a view of the operation of the colonial system under its most favourable aspect. We cannot doubt for one moment that the slaves of Lord Seaford enjoy a rate of comfort not below, but above, the average rate. Will even his Lordship then deem us unreasonable, if, in the contemplation of such results, we can no longer indulge those day-dreams of improvement and ultimate freedom, wrought out by the humanity of the planters themselves, which, some thirty or forty years ago, may have floated in dim and distant vision before the minds of some abolitionists? They have long since vanished, and it is with deep regret, and bitter disappointment, we are forced to declare, that we have no hope to see any remedy, for the evils we deplore, proceeding voluntarily from those to whose agency Lord Seaford in 1828, as in 1797, would still persuade us to trust. For our own parts, we can now expect no such remedy, except from the direct interposition of Parliament, or from the more awful and uncontrollable interposition of the Divine power and providence.

The abolitionists therefore, we maintain, may have been justified, thirty or forty years ago, in looking forward to the extinction of slavery in the West Indies, by means similar to those which had put an end to villenage in England, namely, a progressive amelioration in the condition of the slaves, the unforced fruit of the masters' humanity, leading to a progressive and rapid increase in their numbers, until slavery should glide insensibly into freedom; and yet it might be perfectly inexcusable in them if they were now to indulge in any such expectation.

And here let it be carefully noted, that there are some grand and essential distinctions between the existing slavery of our Colonies and the ancient villenage of England. It would be endless to recount

\* If there be any inaccuracy in these returns it will, of course, be capable of explanation. We can only take them as we find them.

them all. We will at present advert only to one. Villenage had no bounties or protecting duties to support it: it therefore fell before the competition of free labour. If then Lord Seaford really desires, as he says, the termination of colonial slavery, "by the same means which formerly put an end to it in England," he will assist in removing those bounties and protections which prevent that happy change from taking place in the West Indies, which they would have equally prevented in England had they existed there. If he duly considers the subject, he cannot fail to attain to a full conviction that while, by such means, the value of the slaves is artificially raised, and the destruction of their lives is largely paid for in the high prices of slave grown sugar, imposed by those bounties and protecting duties on the people of England, there will not, and there cannot, be any rapid increase of the population, and no hope can be rationally indulged of effectual improvement, and still less of an emancipation of which the masters will be the willing instruments or authors.

We think it unnecessary to make any general remarks on the hope, said to have been cherished by the abolitionists, of a termination to slavery by encouragement to be given by masters to individual manumissions, because the whole policy of the West Indians, from the commencement of this controversy to the present hour, has been to discourage manumissions, and indeed, in many cases, to obstruct, by fines and other expedients, the free exercise even of the master's benevolence. We shall here content ourselves for the present with referring again to Lord Seaford's own case. After examining with great care the returns, from Jamaica, of the manumissions effected there in six years, namely from 1821 to 1826, we find only one case recorded of voluntary manumission by his Lordship. It is the case of Catherine Dodd, (we believe) and her children; the concubine and mulatto offspring, it may be presumed, of one of his overseers. But this, though a voluntary, is by no means a gratuitous act of manumission, on the part of his Lordship; the price paid to him, for the mother and children, having been £700 currency or £500 sterling.

Having now noticed all that appears to be material in the first speech of Lord Seaford, we come now to the second, as it is reported to have been delivered by his Lordship on the 18th of last July.

1. His Lordship by no means agreed with Lord Calthorpe in believing, that there existed an indisposition (amounting almost it would seem according to him to a physical disqualification) in the inhabitants of the slave colonies, to concur in the views of Parliament and of the country for ameliorating the condition of the slaves. He was satisfied, on the contrary, that there existed a sincere desire among them to ameliorate that condition, which desire was only checked by a due regard to the public tranquillity, and the security of property. If any other obstacles had arisen from intemperate feelings, on the part of the inhabitants of the colonies, the cause was to be traced, he said, to the intemperate feelings, and to the unmeasured and indiscreet conduct, of the advocates of emancipation, in short, of what is called the Anti-Slavery party.

Our reply to this statement, the truth of which we wholly deny, will be found in the following facts.

In 1797, (we have already referred to this period,) Lord Seaford, then Mr. Ellis, moved an address to His Majesty, praying him to call on the different colonial legislatures, to adopt such measures as should, *“appear to them best calculated to obviate the causes which have hitherto impeded the natural increase of the negroes, in order gradually to diminish the necessity of the slave trade, and ultimately to lead to its complete termination; and with a view to the same effects, to employ such means as might conduce to the moral and religious improvement of the negroes, and promote their happiness by securing to them, throughout all the British West India Islands, the certain, immediate, and active protection of the law.”* This motion was brought forward by the authority of the same West India Committee, of which we believe Lord Seaford is now, if he was not then, the Chairman. It was supported by all the West Indians at that time in Parliament; and the language employed by its advocates was throughout of the most conciliatory and even complimentary description towards the colonists. Still, however, it would appear that the West India Committee of that day so far distrusted the disposition of the colonies, that they thought it necessary to communicate confidentially with the different colonial authorities, in order to give them every possible assurance, that the true object of the motion was not what it might seem at first sight to be, (namely to terminate the slave trade, and really to improve the condition of the slaves,) but that it was actually designed to prevent the passing of an act of Parliament for the abolition of the slave trade, *“an act,”* as they say in a formal resolution, which, *“should it ever pass the British Parliament, would be fatal to the West Indies.”* To avert this dreadful issue, therefore, they further resolve, that *“for the joint purpose of opposing the plan of Mr. Wilberforce, and establishing the character of the West India body, it is essential that they (the colonial legislatures) should manifest their willingness to promote actively the cause of humanity, by such steps as shall be consistent with safety to the property of individuals, and the general interests of the Colonies.”* The communication of these resolutions of the West India Committee, was accompanied by a circular letter from Sir William Young, the Secretary of that body, declaring it to be indispensable *“to take some steps in the colonies, by legislative provisions, touching the situation of the negroes in respect to society, and to promote a natural increase of their population; and thus not only to stop, for the present, but to supersede the very pretensions, at a future period, to a measure of direct abolition of the slave trade by the mother country; a measure which would blast the root of all our settlements of property, change the foundation of every bequest, loan, and security; turn every mortgage into an annuity on the lives of the negroes; institute a general system of foreclosure; and, depreciating our estates, preclude all immediate resources, and ruin every interest.”*

Our object in bringing forward these facts, is not to expose the gross disingenuousness of the conduct pursued by the West India

party in the whole of this transaction ; that being sufficiently effected by the bare detail of it ; but to shew that though no pains were spared to conciliate the colonists, and to induce them to concur in taking "some steps" which should "manifest a willingness" to improve the condition of the slaves, yet nothing whatever was done by them to that effect ; nor was any such thing even seriously contemplated by them, until, in 1823, the Anti-Slavery Society called upon parliament and the public to interfere. "Then," says Lord Seaford, "when this question was brought before parliament—in the very first instance—before the colonial governments had been tried, and therefore, before they had given any grounds for dissatisfaction or distrust," did the Anti-Slavery party call upon parliament to take the work of legislating for the colonies into its own hands.

We certainly feel some surprise, that Lord Seaford should have made such a statement as this. No cause for dissatisfaction or distrust ! No trial made of the colonial governments ! And yet, after nearly thirty years had elapsed from the period of the above motion of Lord Seaford, not one of his own suggestions, though backed by the earnest recommendations of His Majesty, had been adopted by the West Indian legislatures, but on the contrary, all of them had been treated with utter disregard. Their neglect of the royal and parliamentary propositions of that day is undisputed. No public provision whatever, for the religious instruction of the slaves, or for the institution of marriage, had, in 1823, been adopted. Missionaries, instead of having been encouraged, had been treated, in most of the colonies, and in none more than in Jamaica, with contempt and even persecution. No Sunday had been given to the slaves. Nor had one effective measure been taken to secure to them the due, certain, and active protection of law.

Fifteen years after this recommendation, (in 1811) what is the testimony of Sir William Young himself, the quondam Secretary of the West Indian Committee, in an official Report to the Secretary of State, when he had become the Governor of Tobago ? It was this. "I think the slaves have, by law, no protection." "There appears to me a radical defect in the administration of justice throughout the West Indies, in whatever case the wrongs done to a slave are under consideration. Justice cannot, in truth, be administered, controlled, as it is, by a law of evidence which covers the most guilty European with impunity."—In 1817, what is the report from the West Indies of some of the clergy ? It is this, "If the negroes come to church, they must starve, as Sunday is the only day they have to cultivate their gardens, and to go to market."—In 1823, what had been done to amend this state of things ? We boldly challenge Lord Seaford to give an answer to this question. Even in Jamaica, if the slave law of 1788 is compared with that of 1816, (its latest edition,) it will be found that no improvement had taken place with respect either to the religious instruction and education of the slaves, or to their effectual protection by law. Lord Seaford himself had allowed twenty-six years to elapse without having taken a single step to promote the moral and religious improvement of his own slaves, by affording them the means of education ; or by giving them Sunday as a day of rest and religious instruction ; or by encouraging marriage ; or by repressing immoralities ; or by abolishing the driving system ; or

by exempting women from the labour of the field, or from the punishment of the cart-whip. All, in short, remained in 1823, both in law and in fact, in precisely the same state, as to moral and religious improvement, and as to the effectual, legal, protection of the slave, which the very resolution proposed by Lord Seaford fully admitted to exist in 1797. The slaves were then in a state of pagan ignorance, and they were unprotected by law. In 1823, notwithstanding all the conciliatory propositions which had been made, had any thing effectual been done, by the colonial legislatures, to remedy that state of things? Effectively nothing.\* The slaves were still left without any legal provision for their education or instruction, or any effectual protection by law. And yet Lord Seaford scruples not to affirm, that no trial had been made of the colonial legislatures, and that no ground had been given for dissatisfaction with their conduct, or distrust of their dispositions! Surely this is not quite fair on the part of his Lordship.

2. Lord Seaford then proceeds to accuse the abolitionists of having set out with a proposal, the effect of which was a direct violation of the property of all the owners of slaves, "It was proposed," he says, "to enact that all the children of slaves, born after some short period from the date of the enactment, should be declared free; by which act, the property of every owner of a slave would have been at once converted *from a property in fee to a life interest.*" "But was this attack of property accompanied," asks his Lordship, "with any offer of compensation? No. On the contrary, it was accompanied by a doctrine which struck at the root of all compensation. It was argued then, and it has since been many times asserted, that the title to such property was fundamentally vicious, that it was tainted in its origin by acts of violence and injustice,—and was inconsistent with the rights of man, which forbade that man should be the property of man."

His Lordship then, after endeavouring to shew the mischievous consequences to all kinds of property, if the possessors of it should be called upon to prove that their title was free from all taint of violence and injustice; and also the dangerous effect which such doctrine might have on the minds of the slaves,† proceeds to say, that "Whatever may be the justice of this principle, as between the slave and those

\* We reserve ourselves on the subject of religious instruction. In the mean time we would remark, that the Curates' Act of 1816 forms no valid objection to what is said above. It was not calculated for any purpose of good, and its chief effect was that of prostituting the holy sacrament of baptism, so as to throw dust in the eyes of the people of England, and to put some money into the pockets of the colonial clergy. Even in 1825, the Bishop says, that, in the parishes of the interior, there was actually no semblance of the forms of religious worship.—The only material change in the present slave code, as compared with that of 1788, was adding ten days for cultivating the slaves provision grounds to the number formerly allowed. By law, slaves were as unprotected as before.

† This is a stale argument for blinking the truth, and cloaking injustice and oppression. It was used still more vehemently in the slave trade debates of 1807.—It is vain to hope, that the slaves can be instructed in the doctrines of Christianity, even if they had not the feelings of men, without making them to comprehend the radical injustice of the bondage in which they are held. They may learn submission to the yoke. They never can learn to think it otherwise than an outrage on their own rights, as well as on humanity and religion.

who had originally imposed upon them the condition of slavery; it could not, with any sort of fairness, be applied to a question between the owners of the slaves in the colonies, and the government of the mother country, who, with a view to her own special interests, had established the state of slavery in her colonies, had given to her merchants the monopoly of the slave trade, and sanctioned the purchase of the slaves by the inhabitants of the colonies. As against the mother country, then, the title of the owners of the slave was complete and conclusive, in bar of any right on the part of the mother country, to annihilate or injure, in any degree, that property."

We are perfectly willing to admit, in the fullest and most explicit manner, the truth of that part of this charge which attributes to us the belief and avowal that the title to such property is fundamentally vicious,—tainted to the very core. Nay, we believe that the holding of such property, as it is held in the colonies, is a crime; an outrage on the spirit and the precepts of the Christian religion; a practice radically inhuman, unjust, and unconstitutional; a foul stain on the character of this country; and a source of guilt not to those only who directly participate in its polluted gains, but to all who, with their eyes open, continue to uphold or to palliate its enormities. This view of the subject we not only do not deny: we proclaim it aloud: we place it as the corner-stone of our association: it is the grand motive and stimulus to our exertions. Here we can admit no compromise of principle, in deference to any man or set of men. And we think ourselves borne out in this view of slavery, by the conduct of the legislature respecting the slave trade. For is it not in slavery that the slave trade has its origin? Is it not the market provided by the slave-holder which supplies the direct incentive to all the crimes of a trade in slaves? The slave trade is now constituted a crime of the deepest die. The slave trader is a felon and a pirate. And if the atrocities of the slave trade exceed those of slavery, yet surely the principle of both is identically the same; equally opposed to morality and religion; and equally indefensible on every plea of financial and commercial expediency. An act of parliament or a degree of latitude cannot annul a principle, or turn moral guilt into innocence. And who, we ask, is able to adjust, in nicely-balanced scales, the sum of practical misery which the slave trade and slavery respectively produce? The evils of the first are now well known and appreciated. Even the advocates of West India slavery admit they are no longer to be endured. After years of furious opposition and bitter obloquy against the earlier abolitionists, as now against those of this day, it has become the fashion with them, to repudiate the former object of their fond and affectionate attachment, the slave trade. But who that is disinterested, can condemn the slave trade, and yet contemplate the evils of slavery without kindred feelings of horror? "Can we think of a protracted and irremediable and perpetual bondage, living through the life of the slave, and renewed in his children and children's children to the latest generation;—of the constantly impending scourge and the interminable toil to which it urges; of the blows, the stocks, the contempt, the degradation, the hunger, the lassitude, the disease, the anguish of broken and bleeding hearts, to which the slave is liable;—can we think of all the nameless and scarcely

conceivable agonies which await those whose own destinies, and those of every endeared relation—wife, husband, child—are bound up in the will of another, from whose tyranny and caprice there is no protection in law;—can we think, in short, of all the demoralizing, and dehumanizing, and still more the anti-christianizing effects of such a system; and not be at some loss to discover any very cogent reason for exempting the slavery which exists in our colonies from a moral reprobation as severe as we pass on the slave trade itself, or for exhibiting the former as less an outrage than the latter on every principle of justice, humanity, and true religion?"

But Lord Seaford would infer, from our holding this view of the subject that we strike at the root of compensation, and thus attack those general and sacred rights of property which ought not ever to be violated. The inference is neither necessary nor obvious. We freely admit, however, that the nation are here parties, and are at least equally guilty with (or if the noble Lord will have it so, more guilty than) the planters; and it is for that very reason, and because we view the matter in this light, that we are disposed to proclaim its guilt so loudly. We are anxious not only that the planters should repent of their evil deeds, but that the Parliament and people of this country should do so too. And while we think that the Parliament and the people are equally bound with the West Indians to retrace their steps, and to make at length an ample though tardy reparation to the victims of their common crime, we think also that they are equally bound to sustain the cost of that reparation. Our view of the radical iniquity, the incurable injustice of colonial slavery, has no necessary tendency, therefore, to exclude, from equitable consideration, any claim which the slave-holders may have on Parliament and the country. That they may have such a claim we do not deny; but both parties we conceive would better mark their penitence by forthwith agreeing, first to abandon their crime, and then to settle the account of indemnities between themselves, than by railing either at each other, or at those who denounce the evil, yet profess their readiness to bear a part in the cost of bringing it to an early and effectual termination.

We perfectly concur with Lord Seaford, that the question is not a question between the planters and the slaves, but between the planters and the nation at large. And this very opinion he will find the Anti-Slavery Society promulgated within a few weeks of its first formation, and has since uniformly maintained. In "A Brief View" of the subject, published in April, 1823, and of which some scores of thousands of copies have been circulated, and many are still circulating, stand the following passages:

"It is by no means intended to attribute the existence and continuance of this most opprobrious system to our Colonies exclusively. On the contrary, the guilt and shame arising from it belong, in perhaps an equal degree, to the people and Parliament of this country. But on that very account are we the more rigidly bound to lose no time in investigating the state of colonial bondage, and in adopting such measures as shall bring it to the earliest termination, *compatible with the well-being of the parties who sustain its grievous yoke.*"

"It is our clear and indispensable duty completely to reform our

present colonial system, even if it should require a large pecuniary sacrifice to accomplish that object. The colonists say, they shall sustain a great actual loss by the proposed change. If so, they will have an opportunity of preferring and establishing their claim. But whatever the extent of that claim may be, it is obvious that it attaches, not to the negro bondsman, but to the British nation. It would be repugnant to every idea of equity, if we were to discharge any debt we may owe the colonists, not from our own resources, but with the toil and sweat and blood of our African brethren."

So far then, with respect to the general principle, Lord Seaford and ourselves seem to be in perfect agreement; and we conclude, therefore, that he would concur with us in indignantly reprobating the principle which, in substance, some West Indian advocates have not scrupled to put forward, and which we have already endeavoured to stigmatize as it deserves, (see *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, No. 11, p. 170),—"That though it is admitted that the British nation and the colonists have been guilty of a great crime in enslaving the negroes, yet compensation is due, not from the criminals to each other, or to the victims of their crime, but is due from the negroes to their oppressors; and that in order to furnish this compensation to the criminals, the unoffending victims of their common crime may be retained for ages, if need be, in their present abject and degraded state."

But, says Lord Seaford, "It was proposed to enact that all the children of slaves should be declared free; by which act the property of every slave-owner would be converted from a property in fee, into a life interest.\* But was this attack of property accompanied with any offer of compensation? No."—We are again not a little surprised at his Lordship's inaccuracy respecting facts of so recent a date, and the circumstance raises a strong presumption against the general clearness of his recollections. We are not now discussing the principle of compensation, or whether children should be made free with or without it: we are merely considering the truth of Lord Seaford's unhesitating affirmation that "it was proposed to enact" the liberty of all children of slaves to be hereafter born, and that too "unaccompanied with any offer of compensation." We ask him when and where?—On the 15th of May, 1823, Mr. Buxton certainly did, in the House of Commons, state it to be his intention to move, among various other measures, that all children of slaves should hereafter be born free, the planter having no just claim to them; but he added, "When I say that the planter has no claim against the slave, I do not say that he has no claim against the British nation. If slavery be an injustice, it is an injustice which has been licensed by British law. But whatever be the claim of the planter against the British Government, he can pretend to none to the person of a child born of negro parents." And at the close of the debate, in reply to Mr. Baring, who accused him of not having whispered a syllable about compensation, he said, "I appeal to the House whether there is justice in the charge. I clearly and explicitly declared my opinion

\* See the identity of this proposition with his old argument in 1797, on the slave trade, (above, p. 298, near the bottom of the page).

that the question of compensation to the planter was one that merited attention. The crime is ours, and ours must be the expence of getting rid of it." Wherein then does Mr. Buxton differ from Lord Seaford? But this was not all. Mr. Buxton laid before His Majesty's Government, only a few days after this debate, a detailed plan, with a view to the emancipation, the due education, and the maintenance of the children who should be born hereafter. A prominent part of this plan was a large indemnity to the planters for the children so to be freed, an indemnity, in fact, which would have been far more than their actual value! Mr. Canning was understood, at the time, to have consulted Lord Seaford upon this plan, but his Lordship may have forgotten it. If he now wishes for it he may be furnished with a copy.

Mr. Canning having, however, signified his unwillingness to adopt this plan, another was proposed to him, which Lord Seaford may see in the Appendix to the Anti-Slavery Society's second Report, p. 168—179. Of this plan, which he will also find to have embraced the principle of ample compensation, both Mr. Canning and Lord Liverpool, on several occasions, expressed their approbation. Objections were raised to it, however, in another quarter, and those objections, we regret to say, ultimately prevailed. The substance of them will be found stated and answered at p. 179—187. The observations on the subject in the body of the second Report were to the following effect:

"If we look narrowly into the subject of compensation, we shall find it far from being attended with those formidable and apparently insuperable difficulties with which the exaggerated claims of the West Indians have invested it."—Mr. Barham's estimate of the annual net income of the West Indies, viz. £. 2,100,000 is then taken as the basis of calculation, and being valued at sixteen years purchase, is made to amount to £. 33,000,000, which sum, it is shown, might be liquidated by a perpetual annuity, at three and a half per cent, of £. 1,176,000, "a sum," it is added, "less than the nation is now made to pay" (this was in 1825) "to the West Indians, in consequence of the mode of regulating the drawback on sugar, independently of the protecting duties, and exclusive of all other charges civil or military. What we now pay, however, we pay to uphold and aggravate slavery. A less sum, if Mr. Barham is right in his estimate, would be sufficient to buy out the whole system. And even if this were thought too large a step to take at once, by less than a third of what we now pay," (viz. £450,000 annually) "we might redeem from their bondage the whole of the female population" (alluding to the plan in the Appendix) "and thus extinguish slavery in a single generation."

The reader is now in a capacity of judging whether Lord Seaford is correct in asserting that it was proposed to free the children without compensation.

3. Lord Seaford is further displeased, that the abolitionists should call so strongly and urgently for the interference of parliament with the colonial legislatures, and he labours hard to shew the inexpediency of that course. But we have already dwelt at so much length, and, as we conceive, so unanswerably, on this point, in our last Number, that it seems superfluous to recur to it. We can see no reason why the negroes

in Jamaica should not be as effectually protected from the oppressions, and exactions, and cruelties of the whites, by an act of parliament, as, in Demerara or Trinidad, by an order in council. Of this we feel confident, and that confidence is not a little increased by the tenor of Lord Seaford's speech, that without parliamentary interference, all hope of the fulfilment of the pledges of 1823 must be abandoned. The West India committee, with Lord Seaford at their head, choose to put it forth to the public, and require it to be believed on their word, and without a single attempt at proof, nay, in opposition to the most conclusive evidence—the returns on the table of parliament, and the whole tenor of the correspondence of the colonial secretary of state, with the colonial authorities,—that the spirit, though not the detail of almost every one of the recommendations of the Government has been adopted by every one of the legislatures. The hardihood of unsupported and unwarranted assertion can go no farther than this.\*

4. But there remains a still heavier charge against the abolitionists. They have calumniated, his Lordship tells us, the character of the colonists. Acts of individual cruelty have been collected and detailed to inflame the public feeling. The general state of colonial morals and manners has been misrepresented, while the testimony in favour of the whites has been set aside; and thus has hostility been excited to all plans of reform among the colonists, who, he assures us, are the only instruments of reform. In short, the non-improvement of the condition of the slaves, and the prolongation of their bondage, is the work not of the planters, but of the abolitionists.—This is ludicrous enough; but it is not new. It has been one of the main weapons of colonial controversy from the year 1787 to the present day. Every thing alleged against cruelty, oppression, and injustice, in the case of the slave trade, was, with all the West Indians of that day, as of every succeeding day, just as it now is in the parliamentary report of Lord Seaford's speech;—calumny and falsehood, a vilifying and traducing of character. And so it ever will and must be. For in what terms, we ask, are we to tell the world of that dreadful state of law in Jamaica which enacts that "*In order to restrain arbitrary punishments*—such is the preamble in all the successive acts;—*In order to restrain arbitrary punishments*," every driver or *quasi* driver may inflict ten lashes, and every owner, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or overseer, may inflict thirty-nine lashes of the cart-whip on the bare body of any man, woman, or child, without being required, by law, to assign the slightest reason, or being liable, in law, to one question, for so doing;—in what terms, we ask again, are we to tell parliament and the country of this dreadful state of law in Jamaica, so as to avoid appearing, to the sensitive minds of Lord Seaford and his West Indian brethren, to be traducing and vilifying their characters? We do not say, because we do not know, that on every estate, every driver, or every overseer, is constantly exercising the power he possesses of lacerating the slaves under him; but we do say he has that power and

\* See Slave Colonies of Great Britain; and Anti-Slavery Reporter, Nos. 11, 28, 29, 30, 31, 37, 38, &c.

may exercise it, and (seeing what human nature is) he doubtless often does exercise it; and we further say, that the planters of Jamaica have not only refused to protect the slave by law from such torture, but that their indignation—(we regret that Lord Seaford should, in any measure, have seemed to participate in the feeling) is directed against those who dare to denounce the cart-whip as an object of reprobation.

It were easy to take one law after another, and in the same way to shew what is, in truth, the calumny of which we have been guilty, and which has so strongly excited Lord Seaford's ire, not against the framers and favourers of such atrocious enactments, but against those who hold them forth in their true and proper colours. But we forbear.—If any one wishes to obtain a just view of West India society, or of West India manners and morals, let him take it, not from the pages of the abolitionists; but let him take it from any and every week's *Jamaica Gazette*; let him take it from writers who are themselves West Indians; from the returns furnished by the colonial authorities; from the successive reports and addresses of the *Jamaica Assembly* from 1788 downwards to the present day; from the solemn, and deliberate, and recent enactments of the *Jamaica* and other colonial legislatures; and from the very apologies and defences they make of their system. It is utter folly and drivelling to imagine that any great fabric of crime, and oppression, like slavery, especially if it minister to the cupidity of multitudes, and is attended with the gratifying exercise of that power which is so dear to the corrupt heart of man, can be overthrown without a full and unsparing exposure. It has been our object to expose it in its true colours: we have done so, and shall continue to do so. But we absolutely repel the insinuation that we have calumniated individuals, much more calumniated slavery, if that were possible. All our pages are open to Lord Seaford. We challenge him to point out the passages in them on which he rests (we will not say, in the words of his Lordship, his *calumny*, but) his *charge* against us. We boldly and unequivocally deny its truth, and if he will condescend to make it more specific, we pledge ourselves not simply to deny, but to refute it. All the plausible ingenuity which he has so often employed to varnish over this bad system, if called again into full operation, will only serve, we feel persuaded, to make the triumph of the cause the nation has espoused, more complete; for it is the cause of truth, of humanity, and of justice; the cause of Him who has commanded us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and to do unto our fellow-men as we would they should do unto us; of Him who regards with the same benignity, and has redeemed with the same costly sacrifice, the black and the white, the bond and the free, the whip-galled slave, and the master whose sumptuous table and splendid equipage, and magnificent establishments and dignified station, are the fruit of that slave's misery and degradation. Lord Seaford has strangely fancied that we have been anxious to press into our service every instance of cruelty which the criminal calendars of the colonies may furnish, in order to serve the purposes of inflammation against the persons and characters of the colonists. He has miserably miscalculated and underrated our object. It has been to illustrate the real nature of colonial bondage, and the total destitution of

legal protection enjoyed by the slave under the existing system, and not to excite odium against individuals, that particular instances of atrocity have been referred to:—it has been done to illustrate principles, not to inflame the passions. To take an example:

In the memorable report of the fiscal of Berbice, of the details of which Lord Seaford himself has spoken in proper terms of disgust and abhorrence, there occurs the following statement:

“ Complaint of the woman Minkie, belonging to Thomas C. Jones. ‘ Mr. Jones took me out of the barracks on Tuesday. He sent me to Mr. Henery ; he would not buy me. He sent me to another gentleman. Both said my master asked too much money for me, and sent me back. I begged for a pass to look for an owner. He said no, he would put me down, and cut my \_\_\_\_\_. I was then laid down, and tied to three stakes, and Chance flogged me with a cart-whip. I got a severe flogging. I have marks of severe punishment visible on me ; old and recent floggings, all inflicted by Jones.’ She exhibits her \_\_\_\_\_, which are covered with a plaster by order of the doctor, and apparently lacerated to that degree, that the Court judged it expedient not to uncover it. Mr. Jones being called upon, said he *had* flogged her, and also broken her mouth for her insolence. He had had thirty-nine laid on her, and they were *well* inflicted. When he sent for her he had no intention of flogging her, but, after sending her to three persons for sale and not succeeding, he told her she had often deserved a flogging. He then directed her to be flogged, and that it should be well laid on, which was done.”—Berbice Fiscal’s First Report, p. 14.

In the Fiscal’s second Report, still more memorable, if possible, than the first, because it sometimes adds, to the atrocities of the simple details of the facts of some of the cases, their judicial results, we have the conclusion of this matter,---the legal issue of Minkie’s complaint. The Fiscal had referred it, along with his minutes of evidence, to the judgment of the Court of Policy ; and this is the account of their decision :

“ His Honour, the President, and the Court, were highly indignant at the treatment of this female. No evidence, however, could be obtained to convict Mr. Jones of *having inflicted a severer punishment than that prescribed by law*, although the Court were fully satisfied that the unfortunate female slave had been flogged in a severe and *cruel* manner, and to her sufferings, by her master’s own confession, was added the breaking of her mouth in a most brutal manner,” p. 10. And what was the final proceeding of his Honour the President, and the Court ? They directed Mr. Jones the master to take this wretched woman Minkie from the custody of the under-sheriff on payment of the fees. She was returned into the unlimited power, and placed at the absolute disposal, of this merciless tyrant, without the slightest guarantee against the renewal of the same barbarous treatment. Such is the tale as it stands on the Records of the Fiscal of Berbice.

We have no doubt that Lord Seaford is as much shocked with that tale as any member of the Anti-Slavery Committee. He is greatly mistaken, however, if he supposes that the reason for having produced it before the public was to excite horror against individuals. Who is Mr. Thomas C. Jones ? Who cares for him ? Or what is the value of his character ? And as for all the other parties in the transaction, they appear

to have acted with feeling and propriety. What could *they* do more? The *law* acquitted Mr. Jones. In the view of the Berbice code, (and that of Jamaica is, in this respect, the same,) he had done nothing wrong. He had only exercised the power which that *merciful* and *considerate* law gives to every ruffian, not himself a slave, of inflicting thirty-nine lacerations of the cart-whip on the bare and quivering limbs of a wretched female; nay, we see him insolently bearding the Supreme Court of Justice in the colony, with his daring avowal of the deed, and his exultation in it; and demanding to have the wretched sufferer given up to him as his property; while the President and his associates have no alternative but to restore this poor helpless, unprotected female, to his blows and stripes, and ruffian violence. Nor is it merely the state of the law, as regulating the master's tremendous power, which is here illustrated, but the effect of that most cherished inheritance of the planters, from the touch of which they so sensitively shrink that it is like touching the apple of the eye, (a feeling in which even Lord Seaford sympathizes,) we mean the *SACRED right of property in their fellow-men*, in men made like themselves in the image of God, redeemed like them by the blood of Christ, and heirs like them of immortality.

We shall be probably told again, as we have been told before, to admire the lenity of the slave code of Jamaica, which is so anxious to restrain arbitrary punishments, that it permits no man to inflict, at his own discretion, more than thirty-nine lacerations of the cart-whip at a time; and we may be called, therefore, to express our thankfulness, as has of late been so emphatically done in the House of Lords, that Jamaica has done so much, rather than to complain that she has done so little. *We*, however, cannot concur with any noble Lord in that view of the subject. The Assembly of Barbadoes, and they are plain spoken men, deride the disingenuousness of affecting squeamishly to limit the number of the stripes, for, they tell us, it is far better to leave every man to give as many as he pleases, because such is the power of this instrument, that "in the hands of a relentless executioner, a given number of stripes may, under the sanction of the law, be so inflicted as to amount to an act of cruelty." Indeed, as is well known, even a few stripes may do so. And what says Mr. Barrett, one of the members of the Jamaica Assembly, himself a planter, of this instrument, which that Assembly maintains in its plenitude of operation, not only as a regular mode of arbitrarily punishing men and women for whatever an overseer, in his discretion, or caprice, or passion, or drunkenness, may deem to be an offence; but as the stimulus, the quickener of the labour in the field, both of men and women? He calls it "the fellow of the rack and the thumbscrew"—and he affirms, "that thirty-nine lashes of this horrid instrument can be made more grievous than five hundred lashes with a cat."

But the sheet is full, and we must lay down the cart-whip which Lord Seaford has compelled us to take up in our own defence, reserving the counsel we had meant to give him, for another occasion.







